

**Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo**  
**Friday, May 18, 2012**

**Notes from Commissioner Gist:**

1. Online [forum established on Twitter](#) for Rhode Island educators
2. Commissioner, union leaders to attend [labor-management conference](#) on strengthening the teaching profession

**From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE):**

3. May [education aid](#) to be processed early
4. RIDE announces change in time, location for [Growth Model workshop](#) on **Thursday** (May 24)
5. Commissioner issues order on [Woonsocket aid](#)
6. RIDE develops Rhode Island [Comprehensive Literacy Plan](#)
7. LEAs asked to form [School Data Leadership Teams](#), confirm training dates by June 15 – **Action Item**
8. RIDE begins implementing new [Single Sign-On user accounts](#) for all certified educators

**From the U.S. Department of Education:**

9. Education Secretary Duncan to announce [Race to the Top](#) grant opportunity for districts

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**Action Item Calendar**

**Today** (May 18): Deadline for registration for [web-portal design](#) contest

**Thursday** (May 24): Deadline for submitting [NECAP Science exemption](#) requests

May 25: [Professional Learning Community](#) grant applications due

May 25: Deadline for data managers/IT directors to resolve [TCS errors](#)

June 1: [Educator Talent Pool](#) packets submission deadline

June 1: [District Teacher of the Year](#) application deadline

June 5: Deadline for teachers to [sign off on TCS data](#)

June 8: Data collection for [PARCC Technology Readiness](#) Tool due

June 13: Preliminary [reports on Early Intervention Services](#) due

June 13: Deadline for [homeless-education data](#) filing

June 15: Deadline for forming School Data Leadership Teams (see below)

June 22: Deadline for principals to [sign off on TCS data](#)

June 29: Final reports on [Early Intervention Services](#) due

June 30: Schools and districts submit [final personnel assignments](#)

July 15: Deadline for final reporting of [evaluation ratings](#)

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***Notes from Commissioner Gist:***

**1. Online forum established on Twitter for Rhode Island educators**

Two of our assistant principals – Don Miller, of Pilgrim High School, in Warwick, and Alan Tenreiro, of Smithfield High School – have set up an online social-media forum on Twitter: #edchatri. At this site, Rhode Island educators can share their ideas and views about issues that concern us all. Here is their summary of #edchatri:

#Edchatri is an opportunity that all Rhode Island educators have to come together once a week to discuss all of the happenings in education and Rhode Island education in particular. It is a chance for all of us as teachers and administrators in the Ocean State to share best practices both in the classroom and the districts we work. This will offer all of us the ability to hear from some amazing educators who are working tremendously hard to improve the lives of students. In the end isn't it all about what is best for the students?

#Edchatri will take place every Sunday night at 8 p.m. and will have a specific focus each week, which will be determined in the days leading up to the actual chat. If you think you have something valuable to offer or would just like to hear from some of the most amazing educators in the state and perhaps borrow or be resourceful and use some of the great and effective ideas you will hear about, then please join us each and every week. What a great way to start the new week.

This week's topic will be transitioning to the Common Core. Don and Alan encourage us all to visit their forum and to join in on the discussion.

**2. Commissioner, union leaders to attend labor-management conference on strengthening the teaching profession**

On Wednesday, I will join Frank Flynn and Larry Purtill, as we travel together to a U.S. Department of Education labor-management conference designed to showcase work going on in many states focused on strengthening the teaching profession. School leaders and union leaders from 41 states will participate in this two-day conference. We are looking forward to highlighting for others the partnerships we at RIDE have formed with the both the National Education Association – Rhode Island and the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals on some of our most important initiatives, including educator evaluations, innovation powered by technology, induction and mentoring programs, and communication regarding the Race to the Top initiative. For more information from the U.S. Department of Education on this conference, see:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/2012-labor-management-conference-showcase-local-work-strengthening-teaching-prof>.

**From RIDE:**

**3. May education aid to be processed early**

Please see this message from our Finance Office:

Due to a system upgrade scheduled for Memorial Day weekend, this month's education aid will be processed early. Cities and towns should see the deposits post to their accounts on Friday, May 25. If you have any questions, please contact Kristen Cole, at 222-4681 or [kristen.cole@ride.ri.gov](mailto:kristen.cole@ride.ri.gov).

**4. RIDE announces change in time, location for Growth Model workshop on Thursday (May 24)**

Please see this notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

The Rhode Island Growth Model workshop originally scheduled for Thursday (May 24) from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Department of Administration has been *relocated* and will be held on Thursday (May 24) with a new time, from 9 to 11 a.m., at URI Providence, 80 Washington St., Room 443. Participants should park at the Convention Center garage and will receive parking passes from the workshop facilitator. The session will not be held in a computer lab, so participants should plan to bring a laptop (not a tablet or iPad) along with them.

**5. Commissioner issues order on Woonsocket aid**

Our Legal Office has posted the following Commissioner's order:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2012/007-12\\_RIDE v Woonsocket show cause Order 5-16-12.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2012/007-12_RIDE_v_Woonsocket_show_cause_Order_5-16-12.pdf)

**6. RIDE develops Rhode Island Comprehensive Literacy Plan**

Please see the following announcement from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

As we move forward with our work toward transforming education in Rhode Island, we are excited to be able to share a new resource to help support literacy instruction for all of our students. *The Rhode Island Comprehensive Literacy Plan* (RICLP) provides a foundation and unifies all state literacy initiatives for students from birth through grade 12. We encourage you to distribute [Commissioner Gist's letter](#) introducing this valuable resource to your community.

Support materials for the *Rhode Island Comprehensive Literacy Plan* have been posted on our website at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Instruction/strivingreaders.aspx>

**7. LEAs asked to form School Data Leadership Teams, confirm training dates by June 15 – Action Item**

Please see the following announcement from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

Using Race to the Top funds, RIDE, along with our vendor Wireless Generation, will be providing a year-long, job-embedded professional-development series on the use of data to drive instruction. Schools participating in this initiative will form School Data Leadership Teams (SDLTs) of up to four members to attend the trainings, beginning in August.

RIDE asks that all LEAs share the SDLT guidance (available at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/DataUsePD.aspx> under the **Resources** tab) with their Year 1 participating principals and encourage them to begin forming teams for the trainings. RIDE will contact the Data Use Professional Development point person by e-mail with a form for LEAs to collect the names, titles, and e-mail addresses of team members from each participating principal. Please return forms to Dan Costello at [dcostello@wgen.net](mailto:dcostello@wgen.net) by Friday, June 15.

Any questions or concerns about putting together an effective SDLT may be addressed to Lindsay Wepman, at [Lindsay.Wepman@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Lindsay.Wepman@ride.ri.gov).

In addition, RIDE asks that all LEAs participating in the Data Use Professional Development Series in the upcoming (2012-13) school year confirm training dates with RIDE by Friday, June 15. RIDE will contact the Data Use Professional Development point person by e-mail to confirm training dates. If you are unable to attend the trainings on the dates assigned, please contact Dan Costello, at [dcostello@wgen.net](mailto:dcostello@wgen.net), as soon as possible so that we may accommodate changes.

**8. RIDE begins implementing new Single Sign-On user accounts for all certified educators**

Please see this notice from our Office of Network and Information Systems:

In order to minimize the impact on the LEAs of creating new Single Sign-On user accounts for their certified staff, RIDE will be migrating account information from the existing RICERT system. Prior to the migration process, it is critical that we have valid e-mail addresses for the purpose of notifying all the educators in the state about the new Single Sign-On system and the change to the log-in process. RIDE will soon be launching a web-based e-mail-address verification process that will ask the user to provide two e-mail addresses – one for work-related notification and one for non-work-related notification. So that you are informed as to how we will be reaching out to your teachers, we have included in this memo our process and timeline that will ensure that we are able to contact the maximum number of educators in the state.

Validation and Notification Process:

- On May 14, RIDE requested from your data manager a file containing the work e-mail addresses and identifying information for all certified staff in your district.
- Between June 1 and June 3, RIDE will e-mail to the educators information about the new Single Sign-On Portal, with a link to the E-mail Validation application.
- From June 1 to August 1, RIDE will open the E-mail Validation Application that we will use to validate their e-mail addresses. Each educator will be asked to verify or provide two e-mail addresses. Each educator will identify one for work-related notification and one for non-work-related notification, such as certification notifications.
- We will send a letter in the postal mail to any educator who does not validate by July 1. The content in the letter will be the same as the original e-mail. We will use the home address on file in our certification database.
- In mid-August, we will send an e-mail to all the educators who have validated their e-mail address. This e-mail will notify them of their new Single Sign-On (SSO) ID and temporary password.
- In mid-August, we will be conducting training for the designated SSO Administrator in each district. This will teach the administrators how to use the Single Sign-On system to add, create, and remove accounts and to assign access to the applications available through the SSO portal.

Please contact Ed Giroux, at [ed.giroux@ride.ri.gov](mailto:ed.giroux@ride.ri.gov), with any questions.

***From the U.S. Department of Education:***

**9. Education Secretary Duncan to announce Race to the Top grant opportunity for districts**

Please see this notice from the Office of Communications and Outreach:

On Tuesday (May 22), Secretary Duncan will announce the Department's plans for a district-level Race to the Top competition. The forum will air at 12 noon on the agency's USTREAM channel, at:

<http://www.ustream.tv/channel/education-department>.

For more information, go to:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop/>.

***RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:***

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>